CANAL COLONIZATION IN THE PRINCELY STATE OF BAHAWALPUR: AN ATTRIBUTE OF THE AGRARIAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The canal colonization in Bahawalpur was influenced by the extensive schemes of human settlements on canal lands in the British Punjab by which the agricultural communities of Punjab were settled on the wastelands in the province. During the first half of the twentieth century, the system of perennial canals proved a considerable step forward in extending the cultivation towards the barren lands of the princely state of Bahawalpur. This paper addresses two important questions. What was the procedure of settling the colonists in the Bahawalpur colony and what was the result of that process in the agricultural sphere of the newly opened agrarian frontier. However, the colonization in Bahawalpur was distinct in a way that it was an interrelationship of the farming skills and agrarian practices of both the British India and the princely India. This paper is mainly based on published and unpublished official reports.

Keywords: settlement, canal colonies, agriculture, colonists, peasantry.

Introduction

With the transfer of power to the British Crown in 1858, the Government of India decided to develop the Indus plain into a cultivated area and to open the agricultural frontier towards the wasteland of Western Punjab. The objectives behind these wide ranging plans were both political and economic in nature. Imran Ali analyzed that the congested districts of the Eastern and the Central Punjab were facing shortages of agricultural land caused by the increase in population. This Punjabi peasantry occupied the newly irrigated Punjab plains, which
ensured a surplus in economic production. The other motive behind the establishment of the Punjab canal colonies was to re-employ the disbanded Sikh soldiers in agricultural pursuits. At a later date, military interests conspired to reward the land owning families. These families became the staunch supporters of Britain in World War I. The objectives of the canal colonies of Punjab had two other aspects. First was the provision of food security to the increasing population of India. Second was the ability to extract revenue and raw materials to supply the British industry. Therefore, in almost all the colonies crop production was geared towards the needs of Britain.

Nine canal colonies were developed in the wastelands of the western Punjab from 1885 to 1926. Each colonization scheme had its own strategies and priorities of development based on the needs of local environs. Sidhnai canal in Multan was the earliest attempt of colonization in the British Punjab. Nili bar was the last colony and it was contemporary to the Bahawalpur colony. The British Punjab part of the Sutlej Valley Project (SVP) brought about it. Bahawalpur was the only State in Punjab to come under the colonization program based on the patterns set by the Punjab canal colonies.

Canal Colonies in the Bahawalpur State

Bahawalpur was one of the thirty-six princely states under Punjab government. Two thirds of the State comprised a desert called Cholistan. The physical characteristics of the State displayed a great degree of diversity. Almost all of the South-Eastern part was desert devoid of vegetation and habitation while the Western part was fertile and populated. From an agri-based irrigation perspective, the Bahawalpur State was a part of the great Indus basin. The State had a river border of 180 miles on Sutlej, 100 miles on Chenab and 70 miles on Indus. The river and the desert both served as natural boundaries and became the nexus of development during the early twentieth century when river water was used to irrigate the desert land. The Nawab rulers had always been ambitious to modernize the

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1 The Bikaner State was also a part of the project but it had an entirely separate setup of irrigating the lands than that of Punjab and Bahawalpur.
State. They encouraged the outsiders to increase the population and made plans to extend the cultivation at their local level. However, the Agency government turned its attention towards the desert Cholistan with its administrative dexterity and its new scientific approach in irrigation. The SVP was the introduction of weir control canals in this dry zone together with the construction of migratory villages or chakks around these canals. The canal colonization in the State was originally a consequential part of the SVP.

The scope for human settlement in the Bahawalpur State was vast because a wide stretch of land was unoccupied in old proprietary areas and almost all newly irrigated area was unpopulated. The irrigable area projected for colonization was 2,000,000 acres. Three colonies were established under the project around the three main canals; Sadqia, Bahawal and Punjnad. The three canal colonies were adjacent to each other and the area commended by first two canals held very small population of semi nomadic tribes while the last one comprised on old proprietary area where large plains were lying vacant. The Bahawalpur State colony developed with its own unique dynamics. There were specific political motives behind the grants of land, which amongst other things encompassed the need to procure the skilled agricultural labour to increase its population and to create revenue. This income was to be used to service the heavy loan incurred for the SVP.

**Distribution Plan of Colony Areas**

The distribution of land was under the control of the colonization department. The conditions and clauses of the scheme were largely the same as in the Punjab scheme, although some changes were made as per the local environment. The State was free in adapting the pattern of the internal ingredients of the colonization policy. However, as per SVP agreement the higher echelons of the State, which had the powers of decision making, were all occupied by the British officers who were bound to act according to the prevailing British policy. The process of colonization was undertaken through the Colony Act of India 1912 that was implemented in
the State in 1926. The large area was disposed of through many stages, commencing with the partial completion of the plan in 1926 at Islam weir and continuing after the partition of India.

According to the distribution plan for the area, the whole irrigated land was categorized into certain specific types of grants. The capital element was included to encourage the enterprising farmers. The 50% of barren areas were set aside for auction and 80% of the remaining 50% was reserved for agricultural classes of abadkars. The other 20% from this allocation was set aside for miscellaneous grants. Landless labourers, artisans and menial classes were also moved to the Bahawalpur colony and some specific tracts of land were allocated to them as well. These groups gave the touch of a traditional social set up of a village in the colony called chakk. A small proportion of land was reserved for roads, abadis, graveyard etc.

Before the arrival of colonists, chakk, residential area, streets etc. were marked out. The physical layout often was characterized by the division of land into chakk in which each holding was complete in a single field. The structure of each colony chakk stood on a uniform basis. Each chakk was laid out according to a model plan with wide streets and central squares with half rectangle fixed for lubmerdar, one rectangle for kamis, and two rectangles for sanitation grounds. Besides, three acres were reserved for the Mohammaden graveyard and one acre for Hindu cremation place. Each village was given one or more watercourses and cultivators divided the water amongst themselves on a recurring turn system fixed by canal officers. The process of allotting the colony area was executed in the following the five categories.

i. **Sale and Purchase**

The reservation of land for sale was expected to bring immediate returns and this was an urgent requirement to liquidate the SVP loan. The auction of agricultural land and town sites in the Bahawalpur state varied from time to time and from place to place due to the variation in the soil conditions.
The best tracts of land were set aside for auction to ensure more returns. The perennial irrigated areas of ESC, which had great economic value, were the first to be colonized. Land was auctioned in form of blocks and there was no limit for purchasing that land.

In the first year, the price for perennial land was Rs. 220 per acre and for non-perennial was Rs. 63 per acre to be paid in installments over three years. In the next year, the perennial rate was reduced to Rs. 230 per acre. Both initial auctions were successful. However, in these years, Sutlej and Beas rivers flowed at a low level and the short supply of water caused failure in cultivation and particularly in the Bahawal colony. The yields were so little as to make it impossible for the farmers to pay their dues.

It was realized very soon that the terms needed to change and there had to be leniency in recognition of initial difficulties. Therefore, a new scheme was launched in 1930 to sell the land on concessional terms. Under the new scheme, the period of installments was extended from five to eight years. The first two harvests were exempt from the land revenue and the water charges. An important relaxation in the terms was the imposition of a nominal tax *malikana*, in place of interest. Moreover, installments and acreage rate were suspended as a temporary measure of relief until conditions improved.

The purpose of the installment was to enable the purchasers to pay money gradually from the profit obtained from the cultivation of the land. However, it did not yield the desired results and failure in cultivation broke down the installment system resulting in the State having to give the proprietary rights to the purchasers voluntarily because leniency was imperative for the success of Bahawalpur colony. The State initiated further two schemes for granting concessions to the purchasers. The first was a Lump Sum Payment Scheme to encourage the buyers to pay the entire amount of land at once, at a concessional rate, instead of installments. It offered a concession of 25% on initial deposit and 10% concession in
revenue for the first few years. This scheme continued till 1941, when the colony flourished and agricultural prices had risen.\(^{16}\)

The other was the Compensation and Surrender Scheme for dealing with the purchasers whose land had been confiscated. Some private individuals and the State officials had acquired land in the initial period of allotment, but they could not manage to cultivate it. In this scheme, such purchasers had to surrender the part of their holding for which they were unable to pay. Under this scheme, the State avoided the confiscations and brought back the settlers to their allotted land.\(^{17}\) With regard to the Punjnad colony, land was auctioned in the form of lots instead of an entire *chakk*. This step was taken to encourage the local peasants and to promote self-cultivation. The blocks of up to five acres were auctioned at a rate of Rs. 100/- for superior quality land and Rs. 62/- for inferior quality land.\(^{18}\)

These conditions were more favourable for purchasers but contrary to expectations most of the purchasers were small *zamindars* without large capital.\(^{19}\) Only a very few belonged to the capitalist class because the majority were inclined to the Nilibar colony due to its closeness with Punjab.\(^{20}\) Moreover, small and scattered land in the Bahawalpur colony was suitable for self-peasants while the wealthy class was always dependent on the tenants, which were exceptional in the colony areas.

### ii. Peasant Grants / Abadkari

Peasant grants were the mainstream of the settlement project. Their selection was entrusted to the revenue department whereas locating the colonists and looking after their future interests was the responsibility of the colonization officer. For the convenience of *abadkars*, a system of receiving and dispatching the necessary details was sanctioned. One such arrangement was Chakk Abdulla, which was the focal point in Sadqia colony, from where motor, lorry and camel would take them to the spot.\(^{21}\)

Unlike the purchasers there were certain conditions for the *abadkari* grants. In particular, the land was confined to self
farming peasants. The size of this grant ranged from half an acre to fifty acres. However, on an experimental basis a few chakks were leased out to a couple of zamindars who could afford the capital expenditure. In 1926, chakks on ESC were the first to be notified on abadkari grants. The initial purchase price, locally called nuzrana, was Rs. 150 per acre. The one-fourth of this price was to be paid in advance while the remaining amount was to be paid in six half-yearly installments at 6% interest. Actually, the purpose of installments was to enable them to pay off debt gradually from the profit obtained from the cultivation of the land. 22

The abadkars were required to permanently move to their lands within six months of possession and build their houses within one year. They were exempted from revenue for the first two harvests but exchanges were not allowed. 23 Initially, the old inhabitants of reverian tracts of Ahmadpur and Allahbad tehsils, were given preference in the abadkari allotments because they were severely affected by constant floods. 24 The first batch of abadkars came in 1927 from Punjab. Their payment of nuzrana was due after three years, which started in 1930, but the amount could not be properly recovered owing to the difficulties similar to what the purchasers had to face. Such circumstances had badly affected the returns. Therefore, the installment period was further extended to twelve years and abadkars had the right to exchange poor land with better land somewhere else.

The total allotment for the abadkars was 318732 acres in 1940. The colonization in the Punjnad colony was the last in the process; it started when the price fall was over. In the non-perennial area, there was more relaxation in the terms as peshgi was reduced to RS. 50 and the remaining amount had to be paid in 60 installments of Rs. 25 each. Further, well sinking was a compulsory measure for the owner of two squares. These concessions caused a rapid increase in the population of the Bahawalpur colony.

iii Military Grants
Military grants were an offshoot of peasant grants. The military men of the Indian States serving with the units of the Indian army were selected by their commanding officers for the grant of land in the newly built colonies in Punjab. In the Bahawalpur colony, the State nominated only those military men who were Muslim and belonged to the agricultural class. In this regard, claims from the State’s own army were preferred. The first batch of military men was selected in 1924 in lieu of their services during World War I. Twenty two chakks were allotted to the Indian army from 1928 to 1933 in the Sadqia colony. The viceroy’s commissioned men were granted two squares of land each whereas the soldiers and the non-commissioned officers were granted one square each. Five thousand acres in the Sadqia colony were reserved to the State Force.

The superiority of the military institution was dominant and the conditions for military grants were somewhat more lenient than those for the peasant grants. As the required advance was one-eighth of the total amount and revenue was remitted for five years. The conditions of self-cultivation were not enforced. This grant was for the better land and allowed greater freedom in the matter of exchange. In case of dissatisfaction, the grantees had the right to get their nuzrana refunded. In spite of this relaxation, military men were reluctant to take grants in the Bahawalpur colony, mainly for two reasons. First, though the land allotted to army personnel was of good quality, it was suitable only for self-farming peasants while the majority of grantees was in service and was not living in their allotted areas.

The other reason was the shortage of the tenants in the Cholistan. Therefore, a large part of the land reserved for military grants remained vacant and 70% of them went back. Some of them lived on their land while the rest were absentees, who took care of their lands through their agents. In 1931, this scheme was practically wound up, with the exception of a small area reserved for the State’s military men and pensioners. In regard with Punjab, paradoxically the military grants were a successful attempt. The Jhelum colony was under
taken to fulfill the military needs. The lower Bari Doab was also associated with the army. In fact, the focus of land grants in Punjab colonies was determined by the fact that 40% of the British Indian army in 1914 was recruited from Punjab.

After World War II, the scheme for military grants in the State was revived with the hope of success because by then the irrigation and communication system had sufficiently improved. Two chakks covering 1803 acres were reserved for State forces. In the Punjnad colony, 6059 acres of the military grants were reserved for the post war settlement, which was partially allotted. In Allahabad tehsil, 125 acres perennial and 127 non-perennial land was reserved for the demobilized State soldiers. This revised phase of post war allotment became more successful than the previous one and many grantees settled on their allotted land. At the same time, military grants on good concessional terms by the Bahawalpur darbar encouraged the tradition of tenancy cultivation in place of self-cultivation. It opened the way for military dominance over the agricultural land, which expanded in the successive years to the urban areas and was a major cause of converting the military officers becoming large stakeholders. In Pakistan, Ayesha Siddiq postulates that this legacy increasingly nourished and contributed to transforming the military men into feudal-lords and then into entrepreneurs.

There were some other forms of grants to suit the special circumstances of the tracts of land.

iv. Temporary Cultivation

In order to utilize areas with rough soil, short-term leases for temporary cultivation were granted. The upper ceiling was set as five squares for each individual. Temporary cultivation mostly comprised the surrendered and confiscated land as well as the land reserved for specific purposes, such as for artisans, lumberdari allowance or tree plantation. In fact, temporary cultivation was the best way to test soil capacity within a short span of time. However it was confined to those lands that had the possibility of irrigation and cultivation.

v. Arboriculture

The tree planting along the new roads was important in the colony areas not only for the growth of trees but also for the
future use of timber as a source of income. The grant was generally limited to one square per mile. Owing to this stance, the barren sandy tracts covered only with shrubs were replaced by the rows of shisham trees extending by the avenues of various roads on the canal, branches and distributaries. This grant became more effective in changing the unedifying sight of a vast desert into a green and pleasant landscape. In addition, a special grant for sheep and goat breeding was started on experimental basis in 1943-44. It was given at the rate of Rs. 250 per square and the grantee was to get only the occupancy rights.

The Colonists
The central and eastern Punjab districts were the main recruiting areas for the Bahawalpur colony and for all the canal colonies of Punjab as well. The social background and origin of settlers were different in each colony. Regarding the selection of colonists, there was no communal restriction for the purchasers while *abadkars* had some limitations of caste and religion in the initial phase. A definite schedule of communal distribution was issued, in which the percentage for agricultural classes was fixed. The following graph displays the specific proportions in land distributed to the various castes.

Figure 1: Caste and Communal Distribution Plan for Peasant Grantees
Source: Department of PWD and Revenue, File: 184, Notices and Conditions of Sale of Land in Bahawalpur State Colony 1927, 2.

In this schedule, formerly the non-Muslims were not given any share because the State’s purpose was to maintain its identity as a Muslim society. Later on, this program was revised in recognition of the fact that non-Muslims, particularly the Sikh Jats were the best cultivators and well reputed in getting the higher yields from poor land through their hard labour. Thus, the Sikhs and the Hindus also became eligible for grants. However, Akali Sikhs were barred from settling in the State in order to maintain a peaceful atmosphere.

The State inhabitants received no preference in allotment. However, a small share for nomads was necessary to encourage them to substitute their occupation as cattle grazers with farming. In practice, Cholistani people were less interested at the time in getting land; therefore their share in the schedule was only 10%. In practical terms this schedule did not work out in the end because applications for allotment were enormous and observation of caste and religion was a lengthy process. Ultimately, this scheme was ended and land was allotted on priority following the principle of first come first served, to those who had already deposited money. The distinctive feature was that infant Bahawalpur colony was started with the Muslims and the best agriculturist elements of Punjab.

Initially, both the State and the colonists had to face a tough time. In fact, in the original scheme for colonization, the entire cultivatable area under the SVP was treated as having the same quality and all irrigated land was deemed for selling and allotment. However, after the allotments, the actual result was contrary to expectations. Two major problems appeared; the poor nature of the soil, which required sufficient time and labour to produce returns and water scarcity. As a result, a contraction occurred under each head of the land grant.

For instance, the problems that were faced by the early settlers were much more than unmet expectations. Thousands of them
died of snakebites, pneumonia and typhoid. Moreover, the world wide economic crises of the 1930s also disruptive the colonization program of the State and collection of revenue from the colonists declined due to a severe downturn in the price of land and reduced agricultural produces. More than that the majority of abadkars were poor without resources but had great motivation therefore, they were fully supported by the State.

In order to overcome the initial difficulties, a very lenient treatment was adopted by the State. The special conditions for the low quality land and free harvest of three years were the main part of the State policy. Further, installments and acreage rates were suspended as a temporary measure of relief until the conditions improved. To provide the financial relief to zamindars, the State lavishly granted the takavi grants. The result of these concessions was satisfactory and succeeded in securing the cultivation of poor quality land. The early hardships were smoothed away when market confidence returned to the levels of the pre-slump years and colonists were able to consolidate their economic position or expand their holdings.

Development of Agriculture in the Bahawalpur Colony Areas

Colonization in the State was centered on the land consisting of sand hills and barren plains. With the passing of time, the difficulties were going to be reduced and satisfactory results appeared. The proprietary rights were transferred directly from the State to the colonist. Out of the total specified area, 53% of the land up to 1947 attained the property rights.

The canal settlements increased the population level in the State, which was the foremost purpose of the Nawabs from the inception of the State. There were approximately seven lacs of colonists in the Bahawalpur colony. It was the first occasion in the history of India that an extensive migration of peasant families of British Punjab towards a Princely State occurred. In spite of their ethnic diversity, colonists became a part of the mainstream of the State. The colony areas consisted of the self-
cultivators so there emerged a self-supporting peasantry in place of big landlords. Figure 2 posits that from 1867 to 1941, there was 367.95% increase in the State population.

Figure 2: The Population of the Bahawalpur State at Different Time Intervals

Source: Extracted from Sheikh Fazal Illahi, Census of India 1941, Vol. VI.

There was a sea change in the agricultural sphere of the State and cash crops were extensively cultivated in the colony areas. This turned food production economy into a market-oriented economy. In fact, the GOI laid emphasis on the cultivation of wheat, cotton and sugarcane in all the colony areas in Punjab so that they might be exported to the British markets. The British textile manufacturers putting pressure for the growth of American cotton and were actively lobbying for support for the British textile industry. After World War I, many speedy measures were adopted in all Punjab colonies to increase the production of wheat and cotton
in order to fulfill the imperial needs. The crop experiments, seed provisions, conditional grants and high prices of cotton were in fact the major incentives to this end.

In the Bahawalpur State, improved seeds were introduced in the last two decades of 19th century and a shift in the acreage under high-yielding varieties occurred after the SVP. Particularly, cotton cultivation became more organized and productive. The long staple varieties of American cotton were 4-F, 124 F and K. T.25, which gave more yield and income than the desi cotton. The first sort was more effective in the non-perennial areas of the Rahimyar Khan District and Minchinabad tehsil of the Bahawalpur district while the latter two sorts were successful on perennial tracts mainly of the Bahawalpur district. In Allahbad tehsil, significant increase in area under cotton cultivation was noticed in sailaba (flood land), which in 1927-28 was only 69 acres and rose to 35815 acre in 1939-41. But it was grown at the expense of rice, which had been produced from the ancient times in the region and dwindled from 69% to only 4% in this tehsil. The overall production of cotton in the State went up by two lacs of bales annually. In addition, the two additional new varieties (C-518 and C-591) of wheat were introduced. The former yielded highest returns on good soil and the latter one gave good results on average types of land.

With the inception of the agriculture department in 1938, research oriented practices were started. The major orientation by the department was to introduce the latest scientific methods. The influential step under the agricultural department was the demonstration plots of wheat, gram, bajra, jowar and sugarcane comprising of the 100-200 acres. The land was selected in the rural area of each tehsil in the State. These were also assumed to be the centre of producing and selling good seeds. These demonstrating plots were supported well
by the peasants. The crops were sown on the new methods of cultivation as cotton grown in lines, wheat sown by drills in place of broadcasting, and sugarcane sown in ridges. The cultivator’s were also provided with training for the management of their own fields. Moreover, an agricultural school was established to teach solely agricultural education. Its main feature was that the sons of zamindars and cultivators were also provided training to manage their lands own.

Accordingly, the total rise in cultivated area of the Bahawalpur and Rahimyar Khan districts was 40% and 80% respectively. In the latter case, the percentage of area was in excess because it comprised the old proprietary tracts. There was a four-fold increase in the area under agricultural production. Revenue generation and collection remained the prime focus to make the colonization project remunerative. According to the official estimates, prior to 1938-39, the Bahawalpur colony areas, though not fully developed provided 20.9% of the gross revenue. The State income enhanced from Rs.1316021 in 1870-71 to Rs. 5812474 in 1945-46. Further, owing to the dexterity of this hard working peasantry, the Bahawalpur State was able to provide 500,000 tons of food grain for the food deficit areas of India.

The establishment of a series of market towns was another significant expression of this economic development. Many towns were developed into major marketing centers. Earlier they had been either non-existent or with inconsequential amounts of inhabitants. The market work proceeded in stages. In the Sadqia colony, Harunabad, Fort Abbas, Chishtian, Bahawalnagar and Hasilpur mandis were established and became successful. In the Bahawal colony, Yazman mandi suffered a setback due to its location on poor land of that canal. In the Punjnad colony, also having the old proprietary area, no new market town was set up. Instead the already existing major towns such as
Sadiqabad, Rahimyar Khan and Khanpur were commercially developed. These towns already held the status of business centers and more markets with shops and separate buildings were constructed. Furthermore, the abandoned area of the Abbasia canal of about 1.5 lac acres was reopened and was colonized in the following years. Its development was so fast that the target of eighty percent land distribution was attained within five years.

The improved methods of pest control crop and artificial manure were demonstrated in the agricultural exhibitions conducted during the cattle fairs. These celebrations were customarily held at Uch, Jetha Bhutta, Mandi Sadiq Ganj, Chishtian, Harunabad and Bahawalnagar. The good specimens of agricultural produces were also brought by zamindars in these shows. For instance crop experimental farms were opened at Khanpur, Rahimyar khan and Chakk Katora with 275 acres, 998 and 1200 acres respectively in order to get better yields and by advising the peasants on different agricultural aspects and techniques. Contrary to the Punjab case, the farms at Bahawalpur became very successful in achieving their targets. The Khanpur and Rahimyar Khan farms gave a net profit of Rs.19723 and Rs. 33842 respectively. Latest machinery and improved implements were incorporated into agricultural procedures like furrow turning, drills, threshers and cutters. These simplified the heavy work in fields and facilitated the work of the farmers as the indigenous tools like ploughs, harrows and hoes were improved.

The village sites of the princely India experienced modernity and the colonies were the forerunner of industrialization process. In the development of each market town, the foundation of a cotton and pressing factories was a compulsory condition. The total yearly turn out of cotton was enhanced by 47000 mun, which lent great support to the cotton industry. In this regard, a
great success was achieved with the establishment of Abbasia textile mill. The mill provided employment to the colonists and encouraged the zamindars to enhance their cotton production. This increased cotton was exported to Britain in order to support its textile industry.

For instance, a system of trunk roads was developed in the colony areas. The pacca roads of 358 miles and kachha roads of 448 miles for carts were built up to facilitate settlers who came with their gadda system. Besides this subsidiary means of travel, a bus service was started for colony areas.

In 1928, there established a new railway track Cholistan-Bahawalnagar line having 110 miles length. This track was entirely for colony use. With the railway network, the interior towns of colony were directly connected with the major export outlets as Karachi and Lahore. It also radically altered the native transportation system specially its lower costs and increased speed paved the way for new opportunities of trade of food grains. The construction of roads and railway, bridging the river, launching the educational institutions, providing the public health amenities, and above all founding a number of market towns were all the reflectors of growth oriented economy.

The new communication system made easiest the transport of raw materials and goods within the country and to the ports. Colony areas created an environment in which, they were assimilated into national and international economy. The commercial link of regional economy was maintained first to the internal market towns then to Karachi through arthi who was an intermediary in commercial network. By agricultural commercialization and vast trading activities, the regional economy was interlinked with the world markers. Further, under the British patronage, the focus of export was shifted from Central Asia to the Europe
and England via Karachi. The annual sum of custom was 298974 rupees in 1867 that rose to 572978 rupees in 1945-46.

High production levels allowed the State to liquidate the large loan almost 40 years before its due date. Further, in ‘the Amir of Bahawalpur Refugees Relief and Rehabilitation Fund’, 14 lac rupees had been deposited. Later, 6 lac rupees were added in the Quid-e-Azam Relief Fund. Behind all these expenses were the new revenue streams resulted by the colonization plans that contributed to financing the State.59

**Conclusion**

The State was the sole owner of all land for colonization. As per SVP agreement, the State was willing in simple words, to withdraw its ownership rights for the sake of the most beneficial development. The imperial determinants for development existed in Bahawalpur colony yet the benevolent hand of the State remained the primary influence. Financial motives were preferred in the plan but not at the expense of settlers. Though, due to poor quality soil, the State had to strive hard to attract the colonists and had to show a large degree of flexibility in the terms and facilities. In fact, the canal irrigation required intensive labour and hard work, which made the sturdy and efficient Punjabis the best choice to gain the economic benefits. Purchasers and peasant grantees were the major stakeholder. The major condition for the *abadkars* was to be a Muslim and a member of agricultural tribe while the purchasers had less restriction and more free treatment. Military grants generated an antecedent of transforming the military into feudal element in the upcoming years. Substantially, the colonization process succeeded in getting a large part of wasteland cultivated by a contended body of permanent settlers of agricultural classes who replaced the semi-nomadic environment into agricultural attribute. Settlers, who were the best
peasantry of Punjab contributed greatly to produce the good returns and introduced more advanced cultivation methods to Indians’ India. Accordingly, the colony land became a nexus of new policies to transform the urban and rural landscapes for economic and political gains in the region.
References

2 Ibid, 50.
5 The Indus system comprises the Indus and its five tributaries; the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas and the Sutlej from the East. The Indus and eastern most river Sutlej originated from Tibetan plateau. Salman M.A. Salman and Kishor Upotre, *Conflict and Cooperation on South Asia’s International Rivers: A Legal Perspective* (Washington D.C: World Bank, 2003), 37.
7 Dairy of Political Agent, Vol. III (From 1st April 1903 to 31 March 1904).
8 The State authorities had to take a loan from the government of India and the repayment of the loan was to be furnished by a gradual process of land sale.
9 *Sadiq-ul-Akhbar* 13 May, 1926.
10 Letter from the Minister for Revenue and Public Works to the Nawab Bahadur on Colonization Scheme: 5 April 1927.
12 First auction was held for the perennial land of Gujjani distributary of Eastern Sadoqa canal on 7th and 8th April 1926. Second auction held on 7th and 8th March 1927. See *Annual Administration Report 1926-27* (Unpublished), (Colonization), 1.
13 *Notices and Conditions of Sale of Land in Bahawalpur State 1926*, 98.
18 *Notices and Conditions of Sale of Land in Bahawalpur State, 1926*, 32.
19 Colony Administration Report 1929-30, 1.
20 Colony Land 1928, 6.
21 *Sadiq-ul-Akhbar*, 17 February 1927.
22 *Notices and Conditions of Sale of Land in Bahawalpur State 1926*, 3-25.
23 Ibid.
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37 Department of PWD and Revenue Bahawalpur, File: 184-III, 1927, Notices and Conditions of Land Sale, Official Letter from Colonization Officer to Mr. Dobson, Member of SVP Enquiry Committee on 30th January 1932.


40 *Colony Administration Report 1930-31*, 1.

41 Department of PWD and Revenue Bahawalpur, *Colony Progress Report 1933* (General), 3.


43 Statesman, 4 December, 1945.


Assessment Report Allahabad Tehsil 1946, 1.
This percentage is extracted from the Forecast Report Rahimyar Khan District, 1943; Forecast Report Bahawalpur District, 1946.
Administration Reports of Irrigation Department 1925-26 to 1942-43, 7.
It was the first mega project, resulted by the agricultural progress, commenced on 17 January 1947.